

## New views on the the Vietnam War: Suggested readings

(revised June 2011)

Michael H. Hunt  
Everett H. Emerson Professor Emeritus  
The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
mhhunt@email.unc.edu

The stream of writing on the Vietnam War shows no sign of abating, indeed will burgeon if Hanoi ever provides wider access to researchers. What follows are some highly regarded histories that have enriched our sense of the war over the last decade or so.

**General treatments:** For a survey that does a good job of capturing some of the fresh research findings, see Mark Atwood Lawrence, *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Mark Bradley, *Vietnam at War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), offers a fresh, crisp introduction to the Vietnamese perspective. Gary R. Hess, *Vietnam: Explaining America's Lost War* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2009), is an up-to-date treatment of the enormous literature organized around the chief points of controversy. My own *A Vietnam War Reader: A Documentary History from American and Vietnamese Perspectives* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), contains a diverse set of original documents and first-person accounts (some appearing for the first time). Edwin E. Moise at Clemson University maintains a full and up-to-date guide to the literature: "Vietnam War Bibliography" at <http://www.clemson.edu/caah/history/facultypages/EdMoise/bibliography.html>.

**On Lyndon Johnson:** Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

**On Richard Nixon:** Jeffrey P. Kimball, *The Vietnam War Files: Uncovering the Secret History of Nixon-Era Strategy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004); and Stephen P. Randolph, *Powerful and Brutal Weapons: Nixon, Kissinger, and the Easter Offensive* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

**On Ngo Dinh Diem:** Philip E. Catton, *Diem's Final Failure: Prelude to America's War in Vietnam* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); and Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950-1957* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004).

**On Ho Chi Minh and the Vietnamese revolution:** Pierre Brocheux, *Ho Chi Minh: A Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Sophie Quinn-Judge, *Ho Chi Minh: The Missing Years, 1919-1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Stein Tønnesson, *Vietnam 1946: How the War Began* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

**On the Tet offensive:** Merle L. Pribbenow II, "General Vo Nguyen Giap and the Mysterious Evolution of the Plan for the 1968 Tet Offensive," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 3 (Summer 2008): 1-33.

**On the fighting forces:** Kyle Longley, *Grunts: The American Combat Soldier in Vietnam* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2008); Ron Milam, *Not a Gentleman's War: An Inside View of Junior Officers in the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Meredith H. Lair, *Armed with Abundance: Consumerism and Soldiering in the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Marshall L. Michel III, *The Eleven Days of Christmas: America's Last Vietnam Battle* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002); Robert K. Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006); Andrew A. Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army: Heroism and Betrayal in the ARVN* (New York: New York University Press, 2008); Military History Institute of Vietnam, *Victory in Vietnam: The Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954-1975*, trans. Merle L. Pribbenow (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); and David W. P. Elliott, *The Vietnamese War: Revolution and Social Change in the Mekong Delta, 1930-1975*, concise ed. (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2007).

**On Hanoi's alliance partners:** Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Yang Kuisong, "Mao Zedong and the Indochina Wars," in *Behind the Bamboo Curtain: China, Vietnam, and the World beyond Asia*, ed. Priscilla Roberts (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, and Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), 55-96; Mari Olsen, *Soviet-Vietnam Relations and the Role of China, 1949-64: Changing Alliances* (London: Routledge, 2006); Ilya V. Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War [1964-1972]* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996); and Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge, eds., *The Third Indochina War: Conflict between China, Vietnam and Cambodia, 1972-79* (London: Routledge, 2006).

**On postwar controversy and memory:** Hue-Tam Ho Tai, ed., *The Country of Memory: Remaking the Past in Late Socialist Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Robert D. Schulzinger, *A Time for Peace: The Legacy of the Vietnam War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Michael J. Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Robert J. McMahon, "Contested Memory: The Vietnam War and American Society, 1975-2001," *Diplomatic History* 26 (Spring 2002): 159-84; Jeffrey Kimball, "The Enduring Paradigm of the 'Lost Cause': Defeat in Vietnam, the Stab-in-the-Back Legend, and the Construction of a Myth," in *Defeat and Memory: Cultural Histories of Military Defeat in the Modern Era*, ed. Jenny Macleod (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 233-50; George C. Herring, "Preparing Not to Refight the Last War: The Impact of the Vietnam War on the U.S. Military," in *After Vietnam: Legacies of a Lost War*, ed. Charles E. Neu (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 58-84; and Conrad Crane "Avoiding Vietnam: The U.S. Army's Response to Defeat in Southeast Asia" (monograph published by the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, September 2002).